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Green - Things for Northern Men To Do - 1896

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T H I N G S

FOR

N O R T H E R N M E N T O D O :

A D I S C O U R S E

DELIVERED LORD'S DAY EVENING, JULY 17, 1836, IN THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, WHITESBORO', N. Y.

BY BERIAH GREEN,
PRESIDENT OF THE ONEIDA INSTITUTE.

NEW YORK:
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1836.

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*Transferred from the
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TO MY FELLOW CITIZENS IN WHITESBORO' :

Who are ready to exert themselves for the abolition of American Slavery, whenever they can see any thing for *Northern men* to do in this great cause ; this discourse is dedicated by their affectionate, devoted friend, and servant,

BERIAH GREEN.

DISCOURSE.

"Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel ; Amend your ways and your doings, and
"I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of
"the Lord, the temple of the Lord ; the temple of the Lord are these. For if ye thoroughly
"amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and
"his neighbor ; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not
"innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt ; then will I cause
"you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever."
Jeremiah vii, 3-7.

THE general sentiment among the Hebrews, with which Jeremiah had almost alone to contend, is clearly indicated by a shocking assertion, which they were wont to throw into the face of Jehovah. Crimes of all sorts and sizes they were in the habit of committing ; and then, reeking with corruption and red with blood, of coming and standing before God in his temple, to insult Him with the declaration, that they "*were delivered to do all such abominations.*" Things had taken such a shape and posture, that they could do no better than to violate the most sacred relations, and break the strongest ties which bound them to heaven and earth. They were connected with a system of abominations which they could not dissolve, and from which they could not break away. With the different parts of this system, the fibres of society had been intertwined. It was supported by confirmed usages and venerated institutions. What hazards must they not encounter, what risks must they not run, in opposing the sentiment which generally prevailed around them ! They thought it better to go with the multitude *to do evil*, than incur popular odium in resisting it. They could not keep their character and retain their influence, without taking a share in popular iniquity. Their wickedness was a matter of necessity. Still they could not refuse to see that it was driving their country to fearful extremities. Ruin stared them in the face. What could they do ? On the one hand, driven by such strong necessities to sin ; and on the other, exposed to such exterminating judgments for their iniquities !

Just here the prophet met them. The difficulties in which they were involved, and the dangers to which they were exposed, they owed to themselves. And if they stoutly persevered in the crooked ways they had so rashly trodden, they were undone. Nothing would then save them from the dishonored graves, which their own hands had been so long employed in digging. Yet they need not perish. If they would avoid presumption, they might escape despair. They might not charge the blame of their iniquities on God. They might not allege, that "they were delivered to do the abominations" they were guilty of. So long as they did so, their repentance and salvation were impossible. The work, which demanded their attention, lay directly before them. This done, and all their perplexities, and difficulties, and embarrassments would instantly vanish. This done, destruction, with its open jaws now ready to devour them, would at once flee away. This done, and benignant heaven would pour upon them the choicest, most enduring benefits.

How often, when the sin of slavery has been urged on the consciences of our fellow-citizens, have our ears been pained with inquiries such as these ;—Why trouble us with your impertinence ? what is American slavery to us ? we will do nothing to give it countenance—we can do nothing to hasten its abolition. In all its bearings, it is a matter belonging wholly to the South. Let southern wisdom and benevolence dispose of it. Why should *we* interfere ? Have we not enough of business, appropriately our own, to engross our thoughts and occupy our powers ? And if we should attempt something, what could we do to relieve our country of this heavy burden ? It has so incorporated itself with all our institutions, that its removal must break up the very foundations of our republic. Things have grown into such a state, that slavery, whatever it may be, and whatever it may do, must, so far as our exertions are concerned, be let alone.

But is it so ? Has the North nothing to do with a system of oppression, under which more than two millions of our countrymen are crushed ? What ! has the North done nothing for the establishment ;—is the North now doing nothing for the protection and support of this horrid system ? Nothing, in the civil compact she was so active in forming—which she is so anxious to maintain ? Nothing, in lending her assistance to protect the traffic in human souls and bodies in the District of Columbia ? Nothing, in those arrangements, by which she throws back the fugitive to the whip of his tormentor ? Nothing, in consenting to the multiplied wrongs which are heaped upon colored

freemen? Nothing, in cherishing against them a most insane and malignant prejudice? Nothing, in so closing her eyes, and ears, and lips to the claims of her helpless, outraged brethren? Nothing, in trying in such various ways to discourage the friends of human nature among us from opening their lips for the dumb? In silently permitting or loudly encouraging the rabble, made up of ignorant, thoughtless, wretched creatures, who know not, and care not, what they do, to wage open war upon them? Nothing, in giving up her own children to the mad-dog violence of southern tyranny, to be insulted, scourged, murdered? Has the North nothing to do with a system of oppression, which is corrupting the morals, and wasting the strength, and blasting the character, of the nation? Nothing to do with a system which is poisoning the heart of the church, and eating up the vitals of the republic? Yes, verily. The North has much to do with American slavery. It has deeply involved her in guilt. It is exposing her, every day, and at a thousand points, to the most mortifying insults, and to the deadliest injuries. In what dreams do we indulge? Can the South be rent with earthquakes, scathed with thunderbolts for crimes, *clearly national*,* while the North looks on with the airs of an unconcerned spectator? No, no. If the ship, to change the figure, strikes on the rocks, which "dead ahead" lift up their horrid forms, must we not go down together—swallowed up by the same waves?

* 1. The prejudice against the complexion of the Africo-American, while it is with the people of this country a *national* sentiment, had its origin in slaveholding, and powerfully supports it.

2. The nation, *as such*, is responsible for the existence and continuance of slavery in the District of Columbia. There, on ground belonging to the nation, a market for the sale of human beings is kept open; there, in the prison belonging to the nation, human beings are confined on suspicion of being goods and chattels; there, into the treasury belonging to the nation, the "price of blood" is admitted.

3. It is the general sentiment, that the nation is bound by the terms of "the union" to aid in restoring the fugitive to his oppressor; and, under the protection of this sentiment, the most savage usages and horrid outrages are prevalent even in the city of New York. Unoffending men, women, and children are seized in open day, and in the public streets, with tiger-like ferocity, and thrust into the narrow cells of a most abominable jail, to be *legally* given over by the *legalized* man-trapper to the *legalized* man-holder!

4. An extensive conspiracy has been formed, embracing a great number of the appointed guardians of the public welfare, both civil and ecclesiastical, to support *American* slavery by the sacrifice of *American* freedom! To subserve the foul and execrable ends of this conspiracy, nothing in church or state has been found too sacred to be prostituted. Witness the attacks upon the United States' mail; upon the freedom of the press and of speech; and upon the rights of private property.

But what can *we do*? exclaim a thousand northern voices. I answer, you can,

I. *Thoroughly examine and freely discuss the whole subject of American slavery.* That the subject is one of the first importance, every one is ready to admit. Its bearings on the interests of both bond and free are direct and vital. It deeply affects the character, condition, and prospects of the *master*.* It exposes him to reproach and infamy. It frets away the ties of domestic life. It subjects his children to temptations, greatly hazardous to their virtue, usefulness, and peace. It is a moth, silently eating up his worldly substance. It involves him in guilt. It opens the way to his inmost spirit for keen remorse and killing fears. It feeds his lusts and inflames his passions. It nourishes within him a spiteful opposition to inquiry, admonition, faithful warning. It works him into a fiery, petty despot. It arms his will against his reason. It exposes him to the withering displeasure of righteous heaven. To the slave, it is the scythe of death; to his head, heart, estate, it is destruction. It sternly and stoutly refuses to *let him be a man*.† No other race of beings in heaven, or on earth, can be found with which he may be classed. Of

* American slavery is a system of *fraud, adultery, and murder*. Let this statement be examined in the light which the codes of laws, under which the slaves are crushed, shed upon it. Every slave is a *stolen* creature. He was born *free*, according to the law of nature and of God, as expounded in the fundamental maxim, on which our republican institutions are based. The laws, under which they live, afford no protection to the chastity or life of the slaves. A woman may not raise her hand against any pale-faced violator, drunk or sober, without exposing herself to the lash of the law! In some states, the law admits, that slaves may be put to death by "MODERATE CORRECTION!" And as the courts of justice are required to exclude the testimony of any colored witness, where the case of a white defendant is to be disposed of, any white man may at any time and in any place, murder as many black men as his malignity or interest may prompt him to make away with, provided he keeps out of sight of witnesses of his own complexion. No wonder that the land should stink, as it does, with a horrible and suffocating stench, with the uncovered filth of fornication, and the unavenged blood of innocence! How thoroughly such a system of legalized iniquity has debauched the morals of the whole land of leprosy, a great cloud of witnesses have already borne frightful testimony. Let "every man who has ears to hear," hear the testimony of such witnesses as Thomas Jefferson; the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church 1796; and of the Rev. David Nelson, in his address to the Presbyterians of Kentucky and Tennessee.

† The condition to which they are reduced, is described in the language of the laws of South Carolina, in the following language: "Slaves shall be decreed, sold, taken, and reputed and adjudged in law to be *chattels personal* in the hands of their owners, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever." Stroud's Sketch, pp. 23, 24.

course, it virtually drives him headlong from the universe. Without an inch of ground where he may place his feet, he finds himself friendless and desolate—an outcast amidst his father's family. What dreadful thoughts, then, may not slavery be expected to nourish in his bosom! What desperate deeds may it not nerve his hands to work! This is slavery in its influence upon the growing population of this republic. This is the malignant fiend, which is continually stalking through our land, “breathing out threatenings and slaughter,” and “scattering” everywhere and every day “firebrands, arrows, and death.” If it is not driven back to hell, it will at no distant day turn this garden of the world into a “place of skulls!”

Can any thing, then, exceed the *importance* of the subject of slavery? It is important, vitally so, to every man, woman, and child in our republic. No matter what may be his color, character, or standing, to him it is important. As it has a powerful bearing on every department of life, to every department of life it is important.

American slavery is, moreover, admitted to be a subject difficult to dispose of. This is the testimony of grave divines and profound statesmen; of shrewd politicians and acute philosophers. It is the complaint of the inexperienced and unlettered. Go where you will, and urge on whom you may the evils of slavery, and how generally will you not be reminded, that you have touched upon a delicate and difficult subject! Slavery is almost universally admitted to be wrong and hurtful; but the wisest heads and the best hearts among us, we are told, are sadly puzzled with the problem, how can we get rid of what has well nigh identified itself with our very existence. Will not the nation bleed “to death,” if the cancer is extracted?

Here, then, we have a matter to dispose of as difficult as it is important. The monster, fattening on the blood of our countrymen, has already acquired the size and strength of a giant. Every hour adds something to its ferocity and greediness. If let alone, it will swallow up the nation. Something must be done. But what? That is the question. How shall we obtain the right answer? By shutting up our eyes? and closing our ears? and holding our tongues? By refusing to read? to reflect? to inquire? to discuss? Is this the way to escape from such perplexities and embarrassments? No. If we sit still, we must die. Where great difficulties are to be encountered, and formidable obstacles to be removed, it is our wisdom and our duty to summon and employ the collected powers of the nation. Every body should be encouraged to read, and think, and inquire, and discuss; and all in good earnest. The whole mass of mind

among us should be aroused. Let all who will, present their expedients, propose their plans, bring forward their methods. Every thing should be thoroughly scrutinized, with the fixed determination of making "full proof" of the best methods. Thus, in any other case where we had so much at stake, we should be sure to conduct. Is this the course, my brethren, which you have recommended and pursued? Have you opened your eyes on the various bearings and tendencies of American slavery? Have you diligently collected facts, and thoroughly examined them, and done your best, with skill and judgment, to arrange them, and made them the occasion of laying hold on great elemental principles, in the light of which you might shape your plans and expend your powers? Have you studied the recorded experience of philanthropists abroad, especially in Great Britain? And have you made yourselves familiar with the history of emancipation, wherever the enslaved have been enfranchised? And have you done all this in good faith and sober earnest? resolved to turn every thing to the highest practical account? If not, is it well for you to ask, what can the North attempt for the abolition of American slavery? And so to put this question, as if nothing could be done?

II. *You can regard the enslaved as the children of our common Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier.* Thus regarding them, you cannot help presenting them at the throne of His grace. With what unwearied importunity will you not pour out prayers, that the Former of their bodies and the Father of their spirits would graciously look upon the wrongs, which they can neither endure nor escape. As their wise and merciful Creator, you will entreat Him to open His eyes upon His own image, on His handiwork, now marred, broken, trampled in the dust. As their Redeemer, you will beseech Him to behold the purchase of His blood, thrown away as mere refuse amidst worthless rubbish. As their Sanctifier, you will entreat Him to pity those, who are entitled to His heavenly gifts, who are driven as if they were cattle from His gracious presence. To the God of truth and righteousness, you will humbly carry these, His outraged and insulted children, for protection and redress. You will seek for them every blessing which His mercy has bestowed on you. Kneeling at His feet, you will long, as His almoner, to dispense among them the gifts of His heavenly grace. You will earnestly inquire how, as His servant, you may best subserve their welfare. In selecting the modes in which you may try to do them good, you will seek the guidance of His hand. God of wisdom and of mercy, I hear you exclaim, fill

me with an affectionate regard for thine own children, who lie crushed and bleeding at my feet. May I see in them the accredited representatives of my Saviour. May I give them such sympathy and offer them such aid, as He, in their condition, would be entitled to expect from a disciple. Divest me of every prejudice, unfriendly to the bond of brotherhood, which ties man to man. From every local or clanish feeling, graciously deliver me. Save me from being crippled by the cord of caste. May Thine enslaved children be as dear to me as I am sure they are to Thee. In my efforts to deliver them, enable me to act "upon the principles," which Thy Holy Word reveals. May I welcome on their account such labors, self-denials, and sacrifices, as their peculiar necessities require,—such as are worthy of my relations to Him, who for their sake welcomed the death of the cross! Such prayers you may offer by night and by day; at home and abroad; in the closet, at the family altar, and especially at the monthly concert, where the friends of human nature meet to mingle their hearts in fervent supplication for their deliverance.* Have you done all this? Is it your habit thus to promote the welfare of the enslaved? If not, how can you inquire, as if nothing could be attempted, what you can do in the cause of universal emancipation?

We are able to act worthy of the bonds which tie us to the slave, and identify our interests with his. He is our brother by nature. "God hath made of one blood" the bond and the free. We may own, and cherish, and honor, the dear and strong links which bind us indissolubly together. If we will open our eyes, we cannot help seeing, that *as citizens of this republic*, our interests are identified with the interests of the enslaved. We may refuse to study their condition and relations. The laws, "written in blood," which protect, not *their* persons and interests, but their *heartless tyrants* in insulting and destroying them, we may refuse to read. We may close our eyes to the history of their wrongs, of their unrequited labors, and unavenged injuries. From a pretended regard to the union, which binds us to their oppressors, we may thus stand aloof from our bleeding brothers; may give them up without remonstrance or inquiry to the "tender mercies of the cruel." But we ought to know what we may easily and certainly perceive, that the interests of the slave are identified with ours. To leave him to perish is to cut our own throats! Ameri-

* A distinguished Southerner, while travelling at the North last summer, was heard to say, that the South feared nothing which the abolitionists could publish, half so much as their establishment of a *concert of prayer* on the last Monday evening of each month.

can slavery makes the creatures who support it, more and more eager, insolent, and outrageous in their claims on all around them for homage and subserviency. These petty tyrants are by no means satisfied with domineering over the helpless slave. Their despotic spirit overleaps the limits of their plantations. It lifts its head among the freemen of the North, threatening to strangle in its snaky folds every one who may dare to resist its claims or oppose its progress. Can we stand by in safety and see it crush and swallow our enslaved brethren? Surely not. The fangs which are now dripping in their blood, must ere long be fastened in our shrinking flesh. Have not slaveholders at the South clearly betrayed a disposition to invade the rights and trample on the interests of the freemen of the North? Have they not insulted us and threatened us? Have they not swung their fists in our faces, and brandished their daggers above our heads? Have they not goaded on their miserable creatures among us to acts of lawless violence;—acts, in which our persons have been rudely attacked, our reputation spitefully assailed—all our privileges as American citizens vilely set at nought? Have they not treated us as outlaws in our own country? And with more than savage fierceness—with the open-mouthed eagerness of insatiate blood-hounds—sought to imbrue their hands in the blood of “law-abiding,” unfending freemen? And can we mistake their spirit and designs? Why, they already treat us, as if we had sold our birth-right; as if we had been reduced to brute beasts; as if like goods and chattels we were good for nothing but to gratify the passions and subserve the interests of a bloated aristocracy! If we permit the spirit of tyranny among us to feed and fatten—to grow and thrive upon the blood of the slave, we are undone! I repeat it; nothing but the most wilful blindness can prevent every man of you from seeing that his interests are identified with those of the enslaved.

You can, then, promptly and generously mingle in the great conflict for human freedom, in which your own highest interests are vitally involved. You can act as if you felt that you were bound with those who are in bonds; as if their cause was all your own; as if every blow that cuts their flesh, lacerated yours. You can plead their cause with the earnestness, and zeal, and decision, which self-defence demands. You can hazard all for holy freedom; and maintain with steadfast perseverance the noble resolution to sink or rise with the victims of oppression. All this you *can do*. All this have you done? If not, how can you inquire, what, living at the North, you can attempt in the cause of the oppressed?

III. *The people of the North can avail themselves of the light, which the history of emancipation sheds upon the claims of the enslaved.* How many among us speak as if the subject of abolition had never been discussed and disposed of! They tremble at the thought of making what they regard as an untried experiment. As an abstract matter, they find no difficulty in seeing and saying, that the slave is robbed of inalienable rights; and that he is fairly entitled to the immediate enjoyment of those privileges, which have been wrested from him by remorseless tyranny. But they are afraid to act on abstract principles, though legibly written on the very foundations of their nature! Those first truths which are wrought into the very texture of their hearts; which they cannot deny without stifling the voice of reason, they dare not reduce to practice! Convictions inherent in the simplest elements of humanity, they hesitate to embody in their conduct! They loudly call for *facts*; as if it were possible, that these, whenever and wherever found, could be at variance with the principles of their own nature! And these, they imagine, have not yet occurred!

If such facts have occurred, why have they not been urged on the attention of the American community? Why have we, to so wide an extent, been left in ignorance of some of the most interesting and important events in the history of man? Let the conductors of our periodical presses give an answer. What defence can they set up of the mean and treacherous silence they have selfishly maintained, when they ought to have spoken in tones of thunder? Why have they not kept their readers familiar with the history of emancipation; especially as given in the records of the British Legislature? Were they afraid to let the light of truth shine upon us? Afraid of what? To see us give up our foolish prejudices and groundless fears? Afraid to assist us in escaping from the scorn and abhorrence of the civilized world, by ceasing to utter in defence of slavery, such silly words as would disgrace the lips of an idiot? No. These mercenary creatures were afraid that their subscription list would be reduced, if they should give offence to the chivalry of the South! Let them take home to their hearts the solemn warning, that the chivalry of the South will fail to protect them from the frown of insulted humanity! The hour of retribution is coming on apace. They have no time to lose. Let them make haste and repent.

But apologies for ignorance of the history of emancipation, we can no longer make. Light now shines around us. The stale and malignant slanders, by which the reputation of the enfranchised slaves of *St. Domingo* was long ago so eagerly assailed, we can no longer

repeat with impunity. Nothing but stupid negligence or wilful blindness can now prevent our seeing that the sudden and universal abolition of slavery in that island involved in all its bearings the most substantial benefits. When the rubbish of ages had been removed, crushed humanity by its own inherent elasticity, assumed at once under God the erect posture and dignified port, which are everywhere its natural guise. Here are facts enough to encourage the most timid friend of man, to maintain in behalf of the enslaved the claims of naked rectitude.* And these facts lie within your reach. Have you laid your hands upon them, and turned them to the highest practical account?

With the history of the exertions, which have opened the way for the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies,† we ought to make ourselves familiar. And here, we cannot fail to see, *that the motives to philanthropic effort in England were far less powerful than among ourselves.* The evils to be removed and the dangers to be encountered were far less formidable. The existence of Great Britain was not identified with the existence of the West Indies. The latter might have sunk under the weight of crime to the bottom of the ocean, without touching the vitals of the former. The dreadful tendencies of slavery were, moreover, developed at a great distance from the eyes of the British public. The ocean lay between them and the monuments of oppression. Their ears were not wounded by the clanking of chains. Their eyes were not pained by the sight of fresh wounds. The groans, and tears, and blood, which servitude wrung from its victims, they were not constrained to witness. All, all its naked abominations, so well adapted to rouse and fire the soul of the philanthropist, lay beyond the proper limits of their country. The influence of the West India party in England was powerful.‡ A

* See Quarterly Anti-Slavery Magazine, Vol. I, No. 3, Art. "Horrors of St. Domingo."

† See the same, Vol. I, Nos. 1 and 2.

‡ For a full exposure of the means resorted to, to deceive the British public in regard to the true nature of West Indian slavery, the reader is referred to the able works of James Stephen, Esq. Vol. II. In the most masterly manner, does that mighty champion of the oppressed, show from the testimony of slaveholders themselves, that they were always "casting back upon past times, all that was most reproachful in the system, and taking credit thereby for alleged reformatations. Mr. Stephen wrote in 1830. At that time, the planters were pretending that most happy ameliorations had taken place in their system, in consequence of the abolition of the slave-trade. The hollowness of these pretensions, Mr. Stephen effectually shows from their abuse of Mr. Wilberforce, the advocate and grand instru-

vast amount of capital was enlisted in support of slavery. Whatever intrigue, sophistry, and bribery could effect, was attempted. Formidable obstacles were thrown in the way of the friends of emancipation at every step of their progress.* Great expenses, moreover, were to be incurred by the nation in carrying out their designs. The slave could not be enfranchised unless millions of dollars were thrown away upon his oppressor. And this money was to be drawn from a treasury already laden with debt!

And to whom, in such circumstances, was the cause of the enslaved committed? To the rich, the great, the powerful? To those who stood at the head of the nation, whose names, and places, and connexions would give to their opinions the power of argument and the authority of law? Nay, to whom was committed the law-making power; whose will could wither, and blast, and destroy for ever the demon of oppression? Far otherwise. *Granville Sharpe*, a private gentleman, without patronage and power, had the honor of correcting and instructing the English courts where the claims of the slave were to be disposed of. It was for *Thomas Clarkson* to inform the minds of the first statesmen of his country respecting the deadly tendencies of the slave-trade, and with "his excellent confederates, the Quakers," to rouse the spirit of the nation to its enormities. It was for unpatronized citizens, and unbeneficed clergymen to plead the cause of bleeding humanity; to bring every feeling heart to sympathize with the "suffering and the dumb," and every generous arm to exert itself for the outraged and down-trodden. Under the impulse of disinterested compassion and unwearied love, thousands, men, women, and child-

ment of the very abolition and amelioration in which they professed to rejoice! "The stores of vituperative language," he says, page 40, "are ransacked by every colonial press on both sides of the Atlantic, in the vain attempt to blast his well earned laurels; and in the attempt, not vain, to gratify the malignant feelings of slave masters towards him;—even a superior, but young and inexperienced mind; one who, I hope, has a moral as well as intellectual superiority to common men, and, therefore, will not be ashamed to avow involuntary errors, was so seduced by the contagious sympathies, which in a very short and rapid tour through the islands, he imbibed at every table of his hospitable entertainers, as not only to become, on his return, a volunteer apologist of their system, but to call the now confessed author of all that he thought defensible in it, "the once glorious Mr. Wilberforce."

* Mr. Stephen, in the work already referred to, page 410, thus expresses himself: "The truth must be told. West Indian influence has always been irresistibly predominant, not only in parliament, but in the councils of the crown, and in all the departments of state, and has governed, with some exceptions, the appointment to all offices, ecclesiastical or civil, in the sugar colonies, whether the patronage of them is delegated to the governors, or retained in the offices at home."

ren, standing midway between the top and the bottom of society, strove in innumerable ways to break the yoke of servitude. They tried every method, which approved wisdom and fervent benevolence could devise. They made "full proof" of the power of moral suasion. They exhibited pictures, stated facts, urged arguments. They entreated, warned, rebuked. They summoned poetry, eloquence, philosophy; and these powerful allies came to their assistance. Petition after petition—earnest, decisive, pointed—they poured upon the ears and pressed upon the hearts of their rulers. They "held on their way," till a public sentiment was formed, which swept away the monuments of slavery.

The history of emancipation teaches us to ply the South with strong argumentation, earnest entreaty, pointed rebuke. The pretended friends and apologists of the South, have at different times and on various occasions, tried to dissuade us from attempting any thing to convince the slave-holder of his guilt and danger, on the ground,* that his known character must render all such attempts for ever fruitless. He has been likened to a "mad bull," who, if you should attempt to reason with him, would be sure to bellow and toss his horns! If we would escape being gored to death, we have been warned to keep our distance and hold our tongues! Before we had time to dispose of such owl-like warnings, we have been required to admire the republican spirit and generous chivalry of these citizen "mad bulls." Now it cannot be denied, that the South has given too much occasion for a description of character, so repulsive, disgusting, execrable. The facts, and arguments, and entreaties of the friends of human nature, her citizens have met with furious threatenings, bloody whips, and murderous halters! If they had been able to defend their peculiar institutions in a more manly way, doubtless they would have done so. But this frantic violence, which has turned the whole South in a

* Rev. Leonard Bacon, of New Haven, in his "Review of Pamphlets on Slavery and Colonization," published in the Christian Spectator for March, 1833, tauntingly recommends to Captain Stuart to go and preach immediatism to the South and adds, "if he does not find the undertaking more forlorn than it would be to lead a forlorn hope at the storming of Gibraltar; if he does not find that he might as safely have undertaken to preach the accountability of monarchs, and the sovereignty of the people, in the public squares of Vienna, or have gone as wisely to Constantinople with Mary Fisher, to persuade the Grand Signor to turn Quaker; if he does not find, ere the first week of his mission is accomplished, that he is casting his pearls before swine; if he does not find them turning again to rend him, fiercer, stronger, less to be reasoned with than the *very bulls of Bashan*,—we will acknowledge that he has the best of the argument."

stupendous bedlam, cannot last long. After a few spasmodic efforts to break the force of truth, milder moods will be assumed. She could do no less than second the kind efforts of her apologists at the North, who, with unparalleled meanness and savage atrocity undertook, as a "business transaction," or an electioneering trick, to put down the abolitionists. She has, therefore, lashed herself into fury, which must soon "burn out" by its own violence.

The slaveholder, while he retains a particle of human nature, must be accessible to moral suasion. If the system of oppression which he is so anxious to sustain, has placed him beyond the reach of this, it is murderous beyond the strongest charges of its most determined foes. But we have abundant evidence that he retains enough of the elements of humanity to feel the force of truth. He is not entirely dead to the light of reason, or the impulses of compassion, or the dictates of self-love. He cannot refuse to be wrought upon by the power of moral suasion. So far from this, that a glimpse of his own features, even when obscurely reflected on his eye, tortures him. Listen to the confession of a distinguished Southern divine,* recently made in the presence of a multitude of hearers; the confession, that a piece of handkerchiefs, found in a box of goods from New York, threw a whole community in the land of chivalry and of slaves, into rage and trepidation! What ailed the handkerchiefs? Were they charged with the infection of some deadly distemper? No such thing. They were marked by pictures of Southern life!—pictures faintly exhibiting the condition of the slaves! That was all! And yet our grave divine declared with apparent sympathy in the spirit he described, that if the man who had thus dared to expose the South to the South, could have been caught by the South, he would doubtless have been put to death! Can a people be regarded as dead to moral suasion, who can thus be reached, and wrung, and convulsed by the pictures printed on a sixpenny handkerchief! What might thus be inferred from this and kindred facts, has been once and again acknowledged by supporters of American slavery, of high standing and great authority.† These men assure us that they have no fears of our exciting among them a servile insurrection. Such a fear, they cannot but

* Rev. Mr. Plummer.

† The Hon. John C. Calhoun, in speaking of his Southern opponents last winter in the Senate of the United States, said, "Do they expect the abolitionists will resort to arms, and commence a crusade to liberate our slaves by force? Is this what they mean when they speak of the attempt to abolish slavery? If so, let me tell our friends of the South, who differ from us, that the war which the abolitionists

see and own, must be absurd and ridiculous. They have other fears. If the friends of Human Freedom should find access to the ears and hearts of those who live amidst the monuments of slavery, they might even there raise up friends and coadjutors. Even there the standard of immediate and universal emancipation might be erected, and thousands eagerly flock around it. Thus Southern tyranny would be exposed and denounced by Southern philanthropy! The oppressor cannot bear the thought of having his own neighbors—his intimate acquaintance point at him, as feasting on the unrequited labor of the helpless poor.

From how many statesmen at the South has not the confession been extorted—extorted by the remorse and fear which they could neither dissipate nor conceal—that the infamy with which they were already branded by all the philanthropists of Christendom, was fast becoming insupportable! The plunder of our goods we do not dread, they exclaim; but what is more to be deprecated, *the loss of character*. What can our goods be worth, while we are constrained to bear the scorn and execration of the civilized world, as a nest of pirates? So sensitive, and irritable, and apprehensive has the South become, that she fears to admit a newspaper, pamphlet,* nay, a page of fiction into her presence, till assured they contain no exposure or

wage against us is of a very different character and far more effective—it is waged not against our *lives* but our *character*."

Gen. Duff Green, the editor of the United States Telegraph, and the great champion of "Southern rights," says, "We are of those who believe the South has nothing to fear from a servile war. We do not believe that the abolitionists intend, nor could they if they would, excite the slaves to insurrection. The danger of this is remote. We believe that we have most to fear from the organized action upon the consciences and fears of the slaveholders themselves; from the insinuation of their dangerous heresies into our schools, our pulpits, and our domestic circles. It is only by alarming the consciences of the weak and feeble, and diffusing among our own people a morbid sensibility on the question of slavery, that the abolitionists can accomplish their object. Preparatory to this, they are now laboring to saturate the non-slaveholding states with the belief that slavery is a 'sin against God'; that the 'national compact' involves the non-slaveholders in that sin; and that it is their duty to toil and suffer, that our country may be delivered from what they term '*its blackest stain, its foulest reproach, its deadliest curse*.'"

* Among the works put under the ban of the South may be mentioned *Wayland's Elements of Moral Science*, *Peter Parley's Tales*, *The Monikins*, by Cooper, *The Linwoods* by Miss Sedgwick, *Tales of the Woods and Fields*, and the *Token* for 1836. Hinton's History of the United States, a large and costly work, written by an Englishman, has actually been altered by its American publisher at the dictation of slaveholders in Charleston. The crime of the *Token* was merely wishing, in a single line, that "the foul blot of slavery may be removed from our national escutcheon."

reproof of her favorite sin! She is trying to establish a censorship of the press so rigid and extensive, as to exclude every ray of light from the knot of snakes she is nestling in her bosom! Is this the people whom you say we cannot reach by moral suasion? Who cannot be wrought upon by warning, expostulations, and appeals? Who cannot be moved by admonition, or rebuke, or entreaty? How shallow and superficial must that thinker be, who, for a moment can admit such a supposition! And so we must not expect to awaken in the slaveholder a sense of his guilt and danger, because a single word of expostulation so annoys and distresses him! And because his inward pains make him rave and foam, we are to run away, disheartened and affrighted! How silly and how wicked that would be! Let him

son." Miss Sedgwick's novel was found guilty of containing the following incendiary paragraph:—

"On one memorable New-Year's day, when Isabella was a child of eight years, she presented Rose a changeable silk dress. It was a fine affair, and Rose was pleased and grateful.

"'Now,' said Isabella, 'you are as grand and as happy as any lady in the land—are you not, Rose?'

"'Happy!' echoed Rose, her countenance changing; 'I may seem so—but since I came to a thinking age, I never had one happy hour, or minute, Miss Belle?'

"'Oh, Rose, Rose! Why not; for pity's sake?'

"'I am a *slave*!'

"'Pshaw, Rosy dear! is that all? I thought you was in earnest.' She perceived that Rose was indeed in earnest; and she added in an expostulatory tone, 'Are not papa and mamma ever so kind to you? and do not Herbert and I love you next best to them?'

"'Yes, and that lightens the yoke; but still it is a yoke, and it *galls*. I can be bought and sold like cattle. I would die to-morrow to be free to-day. Oh, free breath is good—free breath is good!' She uttered this with closed teeth, and tears rolling down her cheeks."

The Charleston Patriot of June 25th, 1836, gives the following notice to whom it may concern:—

"Messrs. S. Babcock & Co. have pointed out to us an extremely offensive paragraph, of the true abolition stamp, in a work entitled, "*Tales of the Woods and Fields*," which they advertised for sale in this paper, not being aware at the time, of its existence. *Publishers at the North should exercise a more careful supervision over the contents of all works which they send for sale at the South.* This offence has been too often repeated of late. Messrs. S. Babcock & Co. request us to say that the whole edition will be forthwith sent back.

"We have received a note from Mr. J. P. Beile, also stating, that having discovered offensive matter in the above work, he has refused to sell it, requesting us to withdraw his advertisement from our paper, and that he intends returning the copies in his possession by the steamboat which leaves this afternoon for New York."

After this, does the reader doubt whether reproof is felt at the South?

writhe and rave. Let him flout and foam ; kick, and strike, and bite. He cannot escape from the fires which surround him. The sooner he spits out his venom and exhausts his fury the better. He must not be permitted to escape. He must not have a moment's respite. Wherever he may turn, truth's searching rays must be kept upon him. After rending and tearing him a little longer, the demon, which has so long had possession of him will retire, and leave him in his right mind to appropriate wholesome instruction. Every one of you, my hearers, might contribute something to hasten this result. What have you done ?

Your hold, as an American citizen, upon the District of Columbia, you may turn to high account in the cause of human freedom.—Along with myriads of the friends of man, you can put your name to a petition to the national legislature for the abolition of slavery at the centre of the republic. Less than this you cannot do, without involving yourself, personally, in the guilt of slavery. Harbor not the thought for a moment, that such efforts must be useless. Useless they cannot be. Their various bearings cannot but be powerful and happy. It will *do you* good, good unspeakable, thus to “remember those who are in bonds.” It will keep you alive to their condition, claims, and prospects. It will give you a deeper interest and greater power, at the throne of mercy. Never fear, moreover, that you will pour your petitions on deaf ears and palsied arms. Tyrants there may have “bound themselves by a great curse,” that your voice shall not be heard. But these poor creatures are as weak as they are insolent. They cannot dispose of your petitions without attending directly or indirectly to your claims. Your petitions must be read. The facts you state ; the arguments you employ ; your earnest remonstrances, your strong appeals, your loud warnings, your fervent entreaties, will force their way into ears, which a thousand artifices may have been employed in vain to stop. And those ears will tingle. Tongues, which a thousand artifices had been employed in vain to tie, will be set in motion. Tyrants may roar, and stamp, and curse. But what then ? Surely, the noise and tumult in which they may give vent to their windy rage, will but ill promote the cause of *silence*. By the very act of swearing that a word shall not be spoken, their own oath they will violate ! Their hot blood and rash tongues will drive them headlong into fiery debate. The discussion of the matter may be furious ; but discussion will arise. The agitation of the subject may be fierce ; but agitation cannot be avoided. Come it will, whoever may object. *Nay, nothing can more certainly and effectually introduce*

it than objections! Urge your petitions, then. Let them fly by thousands on the wings of every breeze. Laden with the names of all who love their country, let them speak "the words of truth and soberness" to every trembling Felix, who has a place in the national legislature.

And let me remind you, that every ray of light which is emitted from the *centre of the nation, will reach every point of the circumference.* Whatever facts are there presented, whatever discussions are there had, whatever doctrines are there maintained, will arrest the attention of the whole republic. Influences there exerted, cannot fail to affect the public sentiment on the broadest scale. Impulses there given, will move every limb of the "body politic." The hand, that grapples with the monster, slavery, there has access to his very vitals. It was long ago maintained by the advocates of immediate emancipation; it is, I believe, now generally admitted, that the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia must open the way for universal freedom. The efforts there made in behalf of the oppressed cannot be confined there. Who could hope to keep the chain of servitude strong and bright in Maryland, in Virginia—*any where* in the republic, after the fetter-links had there been dissolved? On that elevated spot, the battles of universal freedom may be fought and her most splendid victories achieved. And it is the birth-right of *every American* to mingle in this conflict. How, then, can you say, whoever you may be, that you can do nothing to hasten the redemption of the captive? Up, and gird on your armor. The foe is directly before you; ravaging the inheritance left you by your fathers! Up, and give him battle! Never let your sword find its sheath, till he spreads his dragon wings, and hides himself among less malignant fiends in hell. Let those, whom you employ to promote the public welfare, know that you *are bent* on the abolition of slavery; that you will never cease to shout in their ears the demands of truth and freedom. Let them see that you are in earnest; and they will not venture to disregard your will. When you say *THEY MUST*, they will make haste to break every yoke, and give deliverance to the victims of oppression. In the name of God, then, and for the sake of bleeding humanity, *speak the word!*

Our ecclesiastical connexions with churches which tolerate in their members the sin of slaveholding, we ought at once to dissolve. Till we do this, we can never reach the vitals of the evil, with which we are bound to contend. Could either of the principal religious denominations at the South be brought in the spirit of true repentance to re-

nounce the crime of oppressing the poor, the monster, which is now fattening on the blood of innocence, must fall beneath the fatal blow. The enormous guilt of stealing men could not fail to attract universal attention. Every man's mind and mouth would be full of the matter. A new channel would at once be opened for public sentiment. Myriads would rush to the work of demolishing the old Bastile. The rusty key of this dreadful prison is even now in the hands of the church. But instead of using it to "open the doors" to those who are pining in its damp, dark dungeons, she is lending her influence to multiply the victims of despair. She is not only the unblushing, heartless, flippant advocate of slavery; but she is not afraid or ashamed to be seen riveting the chain, swinging the whip, wielding the branding iron! She even blesses herself for her pious liberality in putting "the price of blood" into the "treasury of the Lord!" She sells the Saviour's poor to build up the Saviour's kingdom! To obtain the means of sending the Gospel to the heathen, she drives her own children to the market! And worse than all, she blasphemously pretends, that she doth all this in the name and by the authority of the God of truth and mercy! She tortures the sacred volume, to force it to justify the crime of robbing the poor even to the stealing of their babes! Thus, slavery has come to be the pet-sin of a large portion of the American church!

The church must be aroused to her guilt in this matter, or she is undone. The blighting curse of God will waste and wither her. Nothing but repentance can hold her back from the grave of infamy, which is even now yawning, impatient to swallow its prey! Nor can she perish alone. The republic must rot with her in the same dishonored tomb!

Let all professed Christians, who enslave their brethren, know that no honest man can "give them the hand of fellowship," as the disciples of the Saviour. Let them be debarred from the table of the Lord. Let them, if religious teachers they can claim to be, be excluded from the pulpit. Let them see that their sin is no longer to be "winked at;" that if they continue deaf to the voice of Christian reproof, they must be to the whole company of their disgraced and offended brethren, as a "heathen man and publican." They will doubtless be greatly vexed and shocked. They will doubtless remonstrate and complain. They will affirm, and deny, and threaten. But no shift, no turn, no expedient can save them from torturing convictions and stinging remorse. They will find "burning coals" in their bosoms. And the "accursed thing" they will put away.

Look at the present attitude of our brethren in Great Britain.* So ill have they been requited, so shamefully have they been abused, for their efforts to reclaim and save us, that they begin to feel the necessity of renouncing all fellowship with the slaveholding churches of America. And can these churches endure the thought of being thus held up to the abhorrence and execration of mankind, as plunderers and pirates? So disgraced and abhorred, can they help loosening their hands from their brother's throat? This problem, each of you, my brethren, can assist in solving. Stand aloof, then, from what may wear the face of Christian intercourse with the oppressors of the poor.

But your regard for the "peace of the church," you allege, forbids your assuming such an attitude! What; so superior to your Saviour in your love of peace! What; sacrifice truth, and righteousness, and humanity to peace! Thus did not your Lord. Instead of whispering peace in the ears of hypocrites and infidels, He presented a sword to their naked breasts. Upon the heads of those, who "devoured widows' houses and for a pretence made long prayers," He scattered coals of fire. What; do you expect peace as the fruit of a compromise with wickedness! What *sort of peace* can you procure on such conditions? I will take the liberty to tell you. That false peace, which, like the dead calm at sea, foretokens a storm! A peace, which cannot but open the way for war! Peace on such terms, all the righteous on earth and in heaven must pronounce accursed! Alas, alas! We have had enough of that kind of peace! Cursed be the hour, when cunning and malignant fiends persuaded us to "sell our brother into Egypt;" "when he besought us and we would not hear!" Sold our brother for rice and cotton; for sugar and tobacco! Parted with our birth-right for a mess of pottage! Gave him up into the hands of robbers and assassins! And by a most bloody bargain, agreed to help them, if need be, to bind him and lay him upon the altar, a sacrifice to devils! And pocketed the money! And blessed the contract! And praised the enterprise and cunning which filled our greedy mouths with the "wages of iniquity!" And set us to defend our plunder with tiger-like ferocity! Yes, cursed be that hour; the darkest in our country's annals! Then did a pitiful, short-sighted policy triumph over us! Stifling every dictate of justice; every impulse of compassion; every sentiment of humanity! In-

* See the late resolutions of various ecclesiastical bodies, especially the resolutions of the Baptists at their great missionary meeting in Birmingham.

fecting us with guilt! Luring us on to ruin! *Cursed be that hour!* And yet a little while, "all the people," amidst tears of repentance or the pangs of retribution, will shout, "AMEN!"

"The whoredoms of our mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are too many" to admit the hope of peace! "Who ever hardened himself against the Lord and prospered?" Have we not made merchandise of the souls of men—souls purchased by the pure and precious blood of the Christ of God! And this to gratify lust, and pride, and selfishness, too gross and monstrous to be endured by the rudest savages! And do we not insist upon maintaining the habit of robbing the poor—of wresting away his hard-earned wages—nay, of stealing his babes, with a stoutness of heart, a stiffness of neck, an impudence of face, which are seldom found in any, who have not "sold themselves to work iniquity?" And yet talk of peace! So much in love with peace, as "to suffer sin upon our brother!" And leave the wicked without warning! With his prey in his teeth! And the avenger at his heels! Out upon such peace! We have had too much of it already! Such peace a little longer, and we are all dead men!

If we would have peace, let us listen to the voice which calls us to duty and to glory. Let us, with sackcloth upon our loins and dust upon our heads, kneeling with broken hearts at the foot of the Cross, call the nation to repentance. With many tears—for *we have all sinned*—let us lift up a great and lamentable cry. And let us "spare not," till "every yoke is broken!"

Peace on cheaper terms we cannot have. If we let our iniquities alone, they will not let us alone! If we sleep, our damnation will not slumber! Our compromise with slavery is full of ruin. Our "covenant with death shall be disannulled, and our agreement with hell shall not stand." "The overflowing scourge shall pass through, and shall we not be trodden down by it?" Awake, then, awake, my brethren! "Consider the poor;" and ye shall be "blessed!" Cease "to accept the persons of the wicked; do justice to the afflicted and needy; rid them out of the hand of the wicked." "Then thou shalt raise up the foundation of many generations; and thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in."





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